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January 14, 2005

The Hon. Meenakish Srinivasan
Chairman
Board of Standards and Appeals
40 Rector Street
New York, NY 10006

Re: BSA Calendar No. 387-04-BZ
CEQR No. 05-BSA-070R
908 Clove Road
Staten Island, NY
Block 323 Lot 42

Dear Chairman Srinivasan:

I am writing to bring to your attention a matter of concern to the people of Staten Island, particularly residents on the North Shore. An application was recently submitted to the Board of Standards and Appeals seeking a variance of Section 22-00 of the Zoning Resolution to permit a Use Group 6 development at 908 Clove Road. Specifically, the proposal seeks approval to build a retail and office complex, including a 53-car parking lot, on property that sits amidst private residential housing, a major City park, a cemetery and facilities that support the cemetery.

I join with the local community in opposition to this project and urge the Board to deny a variance for its construction. I believe the application proposes a use that is inconsistent with the character and integrity of the area and would adversely affect the surrounding community.

The subject property is bounded by Clove Road; St. Peter's Cemetery, Clove Lakes Park, residential homes and a parcel of land that contains an establishment that sells monuments. The property currently contains a residential home and a building that is used as a flower store. The flower and monument stores primarily provide goods for the adjacent cemetery. Zoning for the property is R3-2 (HS), which permits residential development, but not commercial development, within the context of Hillside Preservation rules.

The proposal to construct a retail and office complex, including a 53-car parking lot, is inappropriate at this location. At a time when Staten Island is moving aggressively to protect the character and integrity of our community, it would be counterproductive to grant a variance for a project that is out-of-character with the surrounding area and would detract – rather than enhance – the local neighborhood. While I do not object to the concept of the project itself, I strongly oppose its siting at this location. A commercial project of this size and scope does not belong there.

I do not believe a hardship has been proven to justify approval of this application. Accordingly, I urge the Board to act in the best interests of the local community and all of Staten Island by denying the application. I also ask that you consider this letter in the context of the relevant rules and regulations.

I look forward to hearing from you soon and please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vito Fossella", written in a cursive style.

Vito J. Fossella
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Satish Babbar, Commissioner
The Honorable Peter Caliendo, Commissioner
The Honorable Joel Miele, Commissioner
The Honorable James Chin, Commissioner
The Honorable Pasquale Pacifico, Executive Director